

Human Rights Commissioner

By email only

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Dear Commissioner

The news that Colombian human rights lawyer Diego Martinez has received another death threat is extremely alarming. On behalf of Thompsons Solicitors, Britain's largest trade union and social justice law firm, I condemn these threats wholeheartedly and offer our unreserved solidarity to Mr Martinez and all our colleagues in the Colombian legal system.

Through Thompsons' partnership with the London-based organisation Justice for Colombia, we have closely followed Colombia's peace process. In 2016 and 2018, I visited Colombia on JFC delegations organised to provide international support and monitoring of the implementation of the peace process.

Mr Martinez was a legal advisor to the FARC during negotiations and is currently representing the family of Dimar Torres, a FARC former guerrilla who was the victim of an army extrajudicial killing in April this year. We note that other lawyers representing FARC members have also suffered threats and intimidation, including Gustavo Gallardo and Nadia Triviño of the lawyers collective Lazos de Dignidad.

Through our support for JFC and our advocacy work, Thompsons is a staunch supporter of the Colombian peace process. While the agreement makes clear legal provisions for justice and accountability through the ground-breaking Special Jurisdiction for Peace, it is our view that these objectives can only be met if lawyers are able to perform their duty free from the threat of violence and other forms of harassment and stigmatisation.

Thompsons offers its support to Mr Martinez and to all our Colombian colleagues working to establish a stable and lasting peace in Colombia. We respectfully urge President Ivan Duque's government to conduct a thorough investigation into the latest incident and to ensure the security of Mr Martinez and all other legal representatives.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Cavalier', written in a cursive style.

Stephen Cavalier  
Chief Executive